

Energy management is the practice of using energy more efficiently by eliminating energy waste. Three fundamental components of effective energy management include:

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| Efficient purchasing | purchasing energy at the lowest available unit cost |
| Efficient operation | operating the equipment that consumes energy as efficiently as possible |
| Efficient equipment | upgrading or replacing existing equipment with more energy efficient versions whenever it is cost-effective. |

This informational flyer will help your municipality take the first steps toward creating and implementing a successful energy management plan.

Track energy usage and total cost:

The key to reducing energy-related expenses is to understand when, where, and how much energy is being consumed; this information can help municipalities make informed decisions and prioritize energy efficiency investments. If municipalities treated energy as a single expense, it would probably be the largest single budget item. However, since energy costs are most likely listed as a series of unrelated expenses for each department, municipalities may not even know how much they spend on total energy, making it difficult to monitor and control. Centralizing energy costs as a line item often increases awareness of energy efficiency. Other measures for implementing a successful energy management plan include:

- ❖ Collecting data on total energy and water consumption for all municipal accounts as a whole and by department.
- ❖ Linking energy consumption to building information (square feet, building use and occupancy, etc.). This is crucial for analysis.
- ❖ Setting up an energy accounting system to help municipal officials identify facilities that are particularly energy wasteful.

Designate or create a lead office, energy manager, or energy committee/commission:

Successful energy management plans require leadership, whether it is the planning department, city or county manager's office, public works, environmental services, or a special energy office. The lead office should not, however, be the only department involved. All city or county departments need to be involved in planning and supporting the process.

Successful policies also clearly give the lead office the authority for implementation.

Link energy programs with community goals:

Identify major community issues and goals related to energy efficiency. The idea is to piggyback energy issues with existing community goals. The community may already have a general plan that outlines goals concerning land use, transportation, housing, energy, and the environment.



Network

Find out what is working in other cities. Share your insights with other municipalities: informed opinions, specific anecdotes and lessons learned, systems-specific information (e.g., HVAC, lighting, refrigeration), and in-house audits or surveys.

Prioritize actions and develop a draft plan

Create a list of options and determine each option's costs, benefits, environmental effects, economic and technological potential, and funding resources. Choose comprehensive projects that produce the greatest benefit.

Some options will be easier to sort than others. Assess the relative impacts of the difficult options by ranking them on a 1 to 5 scale or through other metrics. Once you've decided on a list of projects, develop a draft plan.

Implement the plan

Determine which projects need financing and which are low-cost or no-cost.

It is important to start with realistic goals, but it is also essential to avoid short-term thinking. Concentrate on projects that will produce the greatest impact. Many projects may cost little or nothing to implement, while others will require comprehensive projects.

Evaluate success and update the plan

Reevaluate and update every three to five years. Compare objective with outcome—track and document savings. Look for specific, measurable results, such as reduced vehicle miles traveled or reduced air or water emissions. Tracking ensures that you will have a mechanism to continually report benefits and fine-tune your program.

Publicize the benefits

Foster a clear appreciation of the energy management benefits. That entails marketing, public relations, and media events. Build trust and credibility by letting taxpayer know you are providing services and saving money and energy.

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